



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

**SENIOR POLICY FELLOW
ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH BOARD**

First Things First (Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board) is a public agency and one of the critical state partners in creating a child and family-centered, comprehensive, collaborative and high-quality early childhood system that supports the development, health and early education of all Arizona's children. Passed by voter initiative in 2006, First Things First is funded through a tax on tobacco products. Governed by a State Board and 31 Regional Partnership Councils, First Things First engages diverse constituencies across the state to accomplish its mission. Organizational values include a child and family-centered focus that is coordinated and collaborative; a comprehensive systems approach with continuous inquiry, learning and continuous improvement; and transparency and strong accountability toward achieving outcomes that will ensure all young children start kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life. First Things First strives to be a national model of excellence in all endeavors and acts in accordance with our Beliefs, Actions and Performance statements, which are attached.

Position Summary

Newly launched in 2012, the First Things First Senior Policy Fellow is a part-time, one year appointment that seeks to attract state and national thought leaders in early childhood health and development to provide leadership and navigate the complexities of building and improving a comprehensive early childhood system in Arizona. The successful candidate will work independently and in agreement with the Chief Program Officer, the Chief Executive Officer and organizational leadership to innovatively address policy, financing and system issues and barriers in one of five areas: early learning, children's health, family support & literacy, tribal policy, or research & evaluation. The successful candidate will serve in a part-time (20 hours/week), one-year appointment beginning July 1, 2013. Goals for the year will be defined collaboratively between the candidate and FTF senior leadership and will align with the FTF operational strategic plan. This position is critical in statewide systems planning and proposes and advances solutions that positively impact and enhance a coordinated state and local level early childhood development and health system. This will include close interactions with FTF's program, regional and finance teams as well as serving as an ambassador with external constituencies. The Senior Policy Fellow reports directly to the Chief Program Officer. This position requires approximately 20% travel throughout the state.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The ideal candidate enthusiastically supports the vision and mission of First Things First, and possesses the personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and competency, and has substantial capacity for self-direction. She/he is a systems thinker and leader and has a distinguished career of significant accomplishment in early childhood development and health, with potential to facilitate continuing remarkable work in the field. The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate how his/her unique contributions can be transformational to the Arizona early childhood development and health system. He/she must be a prolific and effective writer and have a proven track record of advancing a policy agenda and collaborating with diverse constituencies and organizations in order to produce successful outcomes. The candidate demonstrates obvious understanding of and comfort in working in a decentralized, transparent organization.

Primary Responsibilities

Based on mutually agreed upon goals:

- Conduct research and provide analysis and advice on key political, programmatic and system agendas.
- Propose policy initiatives, manage the development of the initiative and prepare reports and briefing papers with recommendations for progress.
- Contribute to the planning, development, training and implementation of policies, procedures and practices for the Program Division to ensure high quality and efficient services are provided.
- Contribute actively to strategic planning for policy and program efforts and take the initiative in formulating policy and program agendas.
- Represent First Things First in various venues including with state agency partners, policy committee members and stakeholder groups.
- Serve as a media and external affairs ambassador with subject area expertise.
- Develop and conduct professional seminars and learning opportunities in policy and program content area. Target audiences may include First Things First staff, regional councils, grantees and stakeholders.
- Employ regular cross-divisional communication within the Program Division and with all First Things First divisions.
- Coordinate and collaborate with external customers including local partnership council staff and volunteers, board members, state agency and tribal representatives, committee members, contractors and outside service vendors and other community stakeholders.

Qualifications

- Thorough knowledge and a minimum of 15 years previous experience in early childhood health and development.
- Minimum of masters or doctorate degree from an accredited college or university in medicine, nursing, related health professions, early childhood education or special education, early childhood development, public policy, or related field.
- State and national policy experience.
- Thorough knowledge and previous experience in early childhood systems and service delivery; program development, implementation and monitoring; early childhood research and research methods; and, effective professional development and technical assistance practices.
- Commitment to a comprehensive systems approach and organizational planning that focus on clear priorities, realistic expectations and vigorous assessment.
- Strong team leadership, organizational, and project management skills.
- Experienced facilitation and group leadership skills that result in collaborative success and desired outcomes while working with staff, volunteers, parents, professionals and providers, community leaders, governmental officials, tribal partners, public and private entities and faith based groups in communities throughout the state.
- Excellent written and verbal communication and presentation skills.
- Strong interpersonal relations and oral communication skills necessary to effectively articulate program goals with sensitivity to ethnic, cultural and local community differences.
- Entrepreneurial style and innovative ability to think critically and address problems resourcefully.
- Ability to promote and achieve a broad diversity of thought, background, ethnicity and perspective in providing assistance and resources.
- Commitment to uphold high ethical standards and promote sound business practices.

- History of creating and fostering a mutually respectful work place environment where diverse contributions and perspectives are valued.
- Ability to ensure public transparency and accountability, as well as measure and improve outcomes appropriate for organizational and project goals.
- Agility and capability to work within a fast-moving environment, while also driving toward clarity and solutions; demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities.
- Technical skills that ensure effective use of computer hardware and software and other communication devices.
- Background of progressively responsible leadership positions in public, private or non-profit organizations, with substantial experience in public policy and program development in early childhood health and development.

The State of Arizona provides a comprehensive benefits package, including a top-rank retirement plan and low cost health and dental coverage, which become available after a specified period of employment. Fellowship compensation is \$45,000 for a one-year, part-time appointment beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. Applications are available beginning January 14, 2013 at www.azftf.gov/fellowship.



Our Beliefs, Actions and Performance

We Believe, in order for First Things First to live our Vision, Mission and Values, we:

Respect diverse contributions and perspectives as being fundamental to our success.

Demonstrate individual and collective responsibility by fulfilling our commitments and excelling in our performance.

Conduct ourselves with personal and professional integrity, acting at all times in ways that brings respect and honor to each other, our work and our organization.

We Act on our commitment to create positive outcomes for Arizona's young children through:

Efficient and effective stewardship of resources;

Comprehensive systems approach and organizational planning that focus on clear priorities, realistic expectations and vigorous assessment;

Open, honest and clear channels of communication that foster trust;

Continuous inquiry, learning and reflection;

Coordination and leadership by volunteers, state, local and tribal partners and advocates;

Acknowledgment of and honor for the sovereignty of tribal governments in our work.

We Perform in a manner that:

Empowers employees' mutual respect, teamwork and ethical behavior;

Encourages innovation, promotes excellence and creative problem solving;

Cultivates staff development, provides feedback and reflection on performance and celebrates success;

Responds to the evolving nature of our work with flexibility and adaptability;

Creates a positive atmosphere and promotes a healthy work environment and life balance.